

LISTING OF CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

5 1. (Currently Amended) A system for software module to module communication, comprising:

 a module interface capable of receiving a file system request configured in either
of multiple file system formats ~~a first file system format based on a first operating system,~~
the module interface ~~further capable of translating~~ defined to translate the received file
10 system request into a ~~second~~ dynamic flat file system request ~~format based on a second~~
~~operating system;~~

 a first software module in communication with the module interface, the first
software module capable of communicating file system requests configured in a ~~the~~ first
file system format to the module interface; and

15 a second software module in communication with the module interface, the
second software module capable of communicating file system requests configured in a
~~the~~ second file system format to the module interface,

 wherein the first software module is capable of communicating with the second
software module via translation through the dynamic flat file system as provided by the
20 module interface ~~to facilitate data storage.~~

2-8. (Cancelled)

9. (New) The system of claim 1, wherein the dynamic flat file system is defined as an array of objects including volume-type objects, file-type objects, and directory-type objects.

5 10. (New) The system of claim 1, wherein the dynamic flat file system is defined to incorporate object attributes from a superset of object attributes, the superset of object attributes including object attributes of the multiple file system formats.

10 11. (New) The system of claim 10, wherein the module interface includes a file system translator for translating the received file system request into the dynamic flat file system, the file system translator being defined to combine a parsing and generation function with an ability to create file structures from the superset of object attributes of the dynamic flat file system.

15 12. (New) The system of claim 1, wherein the dynamic flat file system of the module interface provides data storage for both the first and second software modules.

20 13. (New) The system of claim 1, wherein the first software module operates within a first computing system and the second software module operates within a second computing system, the first and second computing systems being independent from each another.

25 14. (New) The system of claim 1, wherein the first computing system differs from the second computing system with respect to hardware, operating system, or both hardware and operating system.

15. (New) An independent storage node, comprising:
a network interface module defined to receive and send data over a network;
a file system translator defined to receive file system requests from the network
5 interface and translate the file system requests into a dynamic flat file system format;
a dynamic flat file system defined to direct storage of data received through the
network interface module in accordance with the file system requests as translated by the
file system translator into the dynamic flat file system format;
a storage device driver defined to generate block-level requests based on the file
10 system requests in the dynamic flat file system format; and
a storage device defined to store data in accordance with the block-level requests
generated by the storage device driver.

16. (New) The independent storage node of claim 15, wherein the dynamic
15 flat file system is defined as an array of objects including volume-type objects, file-type
objects, and directory-type objects.

17. (New) The independent storage node of claim 15, wherein the dynamic
flat file system is defined to incorporate object attributes from a superset of object
20 attributes, the superset of object attributes including object attributes of file systems
associated with the file system requests received by the file system translator.

18. (New) The independent storage node of claim 17, wherein the file system
translator is defined to combine a parsing and generation function with an ability to create
25 file structures from the superset of object attributes of the dynamic flat file system.